

STATEMENT OF THE HONORABLE WM. LACY CLAY
Before the
Subcommittee on Housing and Community Development
“Housing Assistance for Needy Families Act”
May 22, 2003

Good afternoon Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Waters and Members of the committee, and witnesses.

I have been disturbed since the budget for 2004 was released and continue to be concerned at the direction that all of the programs for housing seem to be going. Most or all are under-funded or not funded at all. This is an area (housing) that the President claims as a priority for his Administration. Plenty of advertisement and fancy named programs are available; however there is no new money.

Now Section 8 vouchers, which are in short supply, are proposed to be placed in a voucher grant program for the States in 2005. We know that that will not work. When we consider the dire financial straits most states are in at the present, with no relief in sight, it would be a disaster to place Section 8 vouchers in block grants. States would have no choice than to attempt to manipulate funds for the purpose of shortfalls in other areas. This should not even be considered as a proposal unless the intent is to destroy and severely cut the Section 8 program.

Mr. Chairman I ask unanimous consent to submit my statement to the record.